

II. RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Claims 3, 24 and 34 have been amended to even more particularly point out and claim the subject matter of the claims. Claims 1-2, 21-23 and 32-33 have been canceled. Claims 3-20, 24-31 and 34-46 are pending in the present application.

A. The Claim Rejections

In the Office Action, claims 1-2, 21-23, and 32-33 are rejected. Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections of these claims, Applicants with this paper cancel and amend the claims without prejudice and seek to pursue the allowed and objected-to claims in this application. More specifically, Applicants cancel without prejudice the rejected claims, and amend the objected-to claims so that they are written in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the rejected and/or other claims in follow-on and/or other applications and to present arguments with respect to such claims in such applications. Furthermore, Applicants note that the claims are not amended because of the rejections over the cited references; rather, Applicants merely seek to facilitate compact prosecution and to expedite the issuance of a patent.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the presently pending claims are allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request a prompt Notice of Allowance.

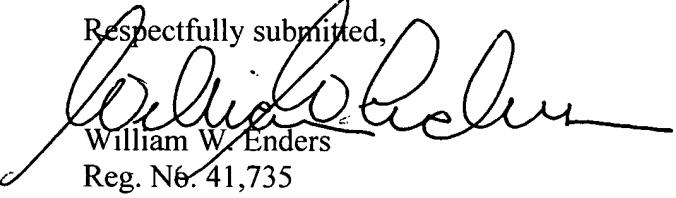
B. Conclusion

The pending claims have been shown above to be allowable over the cited reference. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claims 3-20, 24-31 and 34-46 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and claims is courteously solicited.

Attached is a check in the amount of \$120.00 for the Request for extension of time to respond to Office Action. Should any additional fees under 37 CFR 1.16-1.21 be required for any reason relating to the enclosed materials, the Commissioner is authorized to deduct such fees from Deposit Account No. 10-1205/SILA:127.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (512)-347-1611 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,



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